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SOCIOLOGICAL APPRAISEMENT OF LIBERIAN RESOURCES

By GEORGE W. ELLIS, K.C., F.R.G.S.
Formerly Secretary of the American Legation in Monrovia

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In 1885 Great Britain put the finishing touches to the taking of Liberian northwest territory from the Shebro Island to the Mano River; and following the example of Great Britain in 1892 France forced the taking of Liberian southeast territory from the Cavalla to the San Pedro River. Since 1892 both Great Britain and France have pursued policies of so expanding their contiguous territories as to make inevitable the rapid and complete absorption of the Liberian republic.

It was reported in diplomatic circles in 1908 that Liberia was included in the Anglo-French entente cordiale and was to be divided as near as possible in equal parts between the two Liberian neighbors. Whether true or false it was about this time that the British officials in Liberia undertook the execution of a coup d'état to subvert and overthrow the Liberian republic; and by divers and unwarranted administrative and political aggressions so endangered the perpetuity of the Liberian state that an appeal was made by the people of Liberia to the people of the United States.

The appeal was answered and through the intervention and good offices of the government of the United States the political and territorial sovereignty of Liberia was preserved, and the delimitation of all Liberian boundaries in the hinterlands definitely consummated.

IMPENDING DANGER TO LIBERIAN INDEPENDENCE

Yet, notwithstanding the foregoing and the further fact that Great Britain, France, Germany and the United

States have administrative representation in the Liberian customs revenue with loaned military officers from the United States in charge of the Liberian frontier force, it is reported from high official authority in Europe that in the event the Allies should win in the present European struggle, Germany is not only to be deprived of all of her African colonies, but another attempt is to be made to extinguish the Liberian nation. Various reports have been circulated that Liberia has in some way favored Germany in the present war as the basis for this further hostile action against Liberian independence.

POLITICAL REASON FOR LIBERIAN ABSORPTION

The persistent and deep anxiety to get possession of Liberian territory is partly explained by the fact that Liberia is a Negro democracy, founded by citizens of the United States, and the principles of whose government are out of harmony with the aristocratic rigor and régime of European colonial policies in Africa; that situated at the head of the Gulf of Guinea on the fringe of the greatest black belt in the world, Liberia holds out to the millions of Negro Africans the same hope of freedom in democracy and self-government which the United States have given to the oppressed whites of every land, and is regarded therefore by European powers as a source of constant danger and unrest in the present and future social control of the African races; yet additional light is thrown upon the situation by even a general appraisement of Liberian natural resources.

ECONOMIC TEMPTATION OF LIBERIAN RESOURCES

It is the opinion of the best students of Liberian affairs that, perhaps, behind all of Liberia's grave international troubles is the temptation offered to the powers by the great potential wealth of Liberian resources together with her strategic geographical position. The interior of Liberia is reported to be one of the richest, if not the richest, section of the great West African forest belt.

Its fauna presents an interesting variety of untamed tropical animals and birds of the rarest and most beautiful plumage adorn the air, while its flora is rich in a variety of fine woods and medicinal plants and herbs. Distributed in the most extravagant profusion throughout the Liberian forest are many rubber-producing plants, vines, and trees, valuable varieties of the tropical palm, the calabar bean, kola nuts, rare varieties of pepper and spices, the finest timber in mahogany, ebony, cherry, greasy peach, white and black gum, whistmore, walnut and other woods of commercial value. But of all of Liberia's undeveloped natural products the indications are that mining and rubber offer, perhaps, the greatest social inducement and reward to industrial enterprise and achievement.

MINING DISCOVERIES IN LIBERIA

The annual report of 1909 of the Liberian Development Company, among other things, considered gold and diamonds in Liberia. The report on these subjects disclosed that the operations for alluvial gold, carried out by the company in Liberia, had had very successful results; a deposit of coarse alluvial gold, pronounced with certainty by the company's experts to be payable, was definitely located and proved. In addition to the discovery of gold, the prospecting operations carried on resulted in the discovery of crystals the examination of which in England proved the existence among them of diamonds of good quality and size.

More recently, however, John J. D. Robertson, a Liberian mining engineer, discovered gold and diamonds in Liberia. He reported that in a few months he had found more than 100 diamonds in Montserrado County and exhibited a number of rough diamonds of considerable size and value. A number of streams and gold beds were located in Montserrado County and the Basa district where gold existed in paying quantities.

With a few native workers about 30 miles from Monrovia up the Saint Paul River he mined gold for some

months and frequently brought large amounts to the coast for sale.

In January, 1910, Mr. J. Edmestone Barnes, C.E., M.E., an expert mining engineer from London, examined some mining properties in Basa County for the Enterprise Mining Company, Limited, and in his careful report subsequently submitted to the company he adds:

> The possibilities of the property from a mineralogical point of view are splendid, and I heartily congratulate the Directors and Members of the Enterprise Mining Company for their mining venture which I have every reason to believe will be a new diamond field found after the same character and identical form of the great Kimberly mines belonging to the DeBeers Company of South Africa.

But aside from the above reports, until in very recent times, Liberian native Africans brought large quantities of gold dust to the Liberian coast towns for cash and merchandise. At different times Liberians with no technical knowledge in mineralogy have found valuable stones in Liberia, and after having them cut in Europe, sold them at paying prices to persons traveling on the coast and in Europe. A Monrovian made a specialty of collecting stones for years and having them cut abroad sold them in large numbers to the foreign traveling public and European merchants and traders resident for a time in the country.

DESCRIPTION OF THE RUBBER FAMILY

What may be said about the mining possibilities of Liberia applies with greater force to the development of Liberian rubber resources. Rubber is obtained from the substance of the Apocynaceae family, an order of exogenous herbs, shrubs, and trees, with 100 known species, and is the source not only of rubber, but gum elastic, gutta percha, and caoutchouc. Some members of the family have a poisonous milky juice; the silk of some is wholesome, and that of others is medicinal. They have a five-partite calyx, a carolla with five stamens and some of them have a fruit the pulp of which is edible. We recall

the well known Cerbrera of Madagascar, the Carissa of Arabia, and the Apocynum of North America.

VARIETY OF LIBERIAN RUBBER RESOURCES

Liberia is not only rich in the great variety of rubber-producing flora, but some of which have not been found in any other section of our world. At least 36 varieties have been noted, ranging from shrubs to trees, and from trees to robust climbers, as much as 9 inches in diameter, creeping up tall trees and extending along their tops from 300 to 500 feet.

There are 6 varieties of the Landolphia, tall climbers and climbing shrubs, about equally divided between climbers and robust shrubs; 4 varieties of the Clitandra, a glabrous climber and very much like the Landolphia; 4 varieties of the Carpodinus, 3 robust climbers and 1 robust shrub; 3 varieties of the Ranwolfia, all glabrous shrubs; 2 varieties of the Callichilia, both small trees; 2 varieties of the Canopharygia, small trees; 2 varieties of the Voacanga, glabrous shrubs; 2 varieties of the Strophanthus, climbing glabrous shrubs, one of them deciduous; 2 varieties of the Funtumia, trees from 20 to 100 feet high; 2 varieties of the Alafia, both glabrous climbing shrubs; and besides these there are 7 other glabrous shrubs and 1 tree.

As yet the development of Liberian rubber resources has hardly begun, the chief sources of supply so far being from the Landolphia and the Funtumia varieties. Of the above 36 varieties 10 of them have not been observed outside of Liberia. For some time the Liberian Rubber Syndicate of London held a concession monopolizing the rubber commerce of the country, but this monopoly was destroyed by the Liberian Legislature of 1910 with a view of interesting American investment.

RUBBER COLLECTING METHODS IN OPERATION

During the evolution of the rubber industry and the history of the various rubber concessions a number of stations, more or less permanent, have been established from

time to time at different points in the rich forest lands of the Liberian hinterland. The first station was established by Mr. H. Reynolds in 1904 on behalf of the Monrovia Rubber Company, not far from Bopora just opposite Dobli Zulu Island. Subsequent stations have been established about 20 miles from the coast in the different Liberian counties at Mount Barclay, Kaka Town, Sikonbe, Putum and Woffoke. These stations are occupied by European foresters mostly from Edinburgh Botanical Gardens, and from them as centers of influence and direction the native Africans gather and prepare the rubber which makes up the rubber trade of the country. The rubber activities comprise two methods: (1) Natives are employed by the month to collect and prepare rubber; (2) many native Africans on their own initiative gather their rubber and sell it to the stations or bring it to the coast. And now that any person may buy and export rubber within a belt of 20 miles from the sea line under the customs regulations, the possibilities of rubber development have been materially increased throughout the republic.

The aboriginal method of making rubber is very simple. The wife prepares food for about three weeks in the forest and a party settles in a rubber forested section. There they tap the rubber-producing flora and catch the latex in receptacles. They begin to collect this latex early in the morning or towards the evening. The latex when collected is transformed into rubber by a process of coagulation. This is effected by boiling the latex, by the admixture of an acid re-agent-like juice, or the tannin of wild fruits or bark infusion. Some of the better informed natives then hang the rubber on the rafters of huts to dry. Others not so well informed damage their rubber by placing it in the water or allowing it to absorb moisture and thus bring to the market an inferior quality of rubber, gutta percha, or caoutchouc.

THE RUBBER INDUSTRY IN LIBERIA

Compared with the great natural resources of the country, and the four other leading Liberian exports, rubber exportations are very small; and there has been a marked increase in the development of the rubber industry in recent years. The total average yearly quantity of rubber exported is 100,624 pounds at a total value of $35,156. In dollars and cents this is $315,037 less than palm oil exports; $168,132 less than piassavia; $160,334 less than those of palm kernels; and $129,774 less than the value of exported coffee. Although much less in value than the four leading Liberian exports, exported rubber ranks fifth in the list of exported articles and is $34,833 more than the value of exported cocoa, the least important of all the exports of the country.

The local price paid for rubber is generally 24 cents in cash or 30 cents in goods and merchandise. The latest quoted price commanded by Liberian rubber in Europe was from 60 to 72 cents per pound. Since the beginning of the European war practically all Liberian exportations were brought to a standstill and the present prices are the result of these very abnormal and congested economic and industrial conditions.

The rubber industry has a decided advantage over the other Liberian industries. The daily wage of the ordinary laborer is from 18 to 24 cents a day. By steady work under normal conditions one man can collect from 3 to 4 pounds of rubber per day, and working upon his own account he could realize instead of a daily wage of 24 cents, an amount ranging from 72 cents to $1 a day. So that a load for one man to the market would bring him in rubber about $12. For the same quantity in weight this is $8.64 more than he could realize from coffee; $9.60 more than he could realize from palm oil; and $11.04 more than from palm kernels. So that with the present difficulties of Liberian and African transportation the rubber industry must increase with the wider knowledge among the Africans of the best paying articles of the indigenous products of the country.

RUBBER AS A POTENTIAL FACTOR IN LIBERIA

Liberia is not only fortunate in the possession of a great variety of rubber-producing plants, vines and trees, but throughout the Liberian forest they are distributed in such abundance and profusion, that the rubber belt is practically co-extensive with the hinterlands of the republic. When this vast wealth has been brought fully to the general knowledge of the aboriginals of the country, its profits so much larger than in any other industry and so much more easily made, the advantages of rubber culture must attract to this promising industry a vast army of native workers. The monopolies and concessions having been destroyed by the Liberian Legislatures of 1907 and 1910 the general public has greater economic incentives for participating in the rubber trade.

The ever multiplying uses and social applications of rubber to meet the constantly increasing demands of civilization ere long must call into the market the great undeveloped rubber resources of the Liberian republic. Although fifth in rank in Liberian exports, being outstripped by palm oil, piassavia, palm kernels, and coffee, yet, on account of the abundance and variety of its potential wealth, it seems destined to be the chief and most important product in the future development and socialization of the known natural resources of the nation.

NATURE AND VARIETY OF LIBERIAN COFFEE

Coffee is one of the leading Liberian exports. It belongs to the Rubiaceous family and occupies an important place in Liberian flora. It is represented there by what is known as the Liberian peach, a deep red fruit about the size of an ordinary peach and which is highly appreciated by the aboriginal population. From some members of this family the Africans secure a splendid yellow dye. And while members like the "*ixora*" exhibit only beautiful bunches of rose-colored flowers, others like the "*coffea Liberica*" produce rich and large berries. The pulp

of some of these berries is sweet and very pleasant to eat, while the seed or beans of others afford a very stimulating beverage.

"Coffea Liberica" is what is generally known as the Liberian coffee, yet it exists there in three varieties. One is the coffee tree so frequently met on the coffee plantations of the republic, attaining the height of 20 feet and upwards with large rich black berries of the size of the cherry. For its fine quality and stimulating effects this plant has been extensively cultivated in Liberia and produces what is so well known as the Liberian coffee. The other two varieties have red berries and although existing wild in the Liberian hinterlands, might easily be commercialized and made to contribute to the general coffee supply.

THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF LIBERIAN COFFEE

At one time coffee was "*king*" in Liberia. Liberian settlements along the rivers flourished from the huge profits of the coffee industry. For many years down to about 1895–1896 the average annual price of coffee was $24 per hundred weight. Under the influence of this economic stimulus thousands of large and flourishing coffee plantations sprang into existence in the republic, and more than 1,500,000 pounds of coffee (avoirdupois) were annually exported from the country. Coffee culture was the order of the times and the regal fashion of the day. On account of its delicious and aromatic flavor, Liberian coffee commanded the primacy of the coffee market. In the coffee markets and the coffee-raising countries of the world there was a steady and well paying demand for Liberian coffee.

Just at this time the Liberian planters seem to have made two mistakes, namely: (1) They refused to adopt modern methods in the culture and preparation of their coffee for the markets; (2) they sold by the thousands little Liberian coffee signs to the merchants in the seaport towns, who in turn exported them more and more every year, until

Brazil, Ceylon, and other coffee-raising countries were able to replace their destroyed trees and practically to supply the world's coffee demand, with coffee cultured and prepared according to the latest and best methods of coffee culture.

For these two apparent mistakes Liberia has been subjected to a sudden and permanent depression in what was then her most important industry. Liberian coffee fell from the fancy price of 24 cents a pound to as low as 4 cents. And along with this depression in the price of Liberian coffee came a scarcity in the Liberian labor market. The great colony-holding powers in Africa, under Liberian laws, drained the country of the aboriginal laborers and shipped them by the thousands under long contracts of service to the different colonies in West Africa and to other labor markets of the world. So that the Liberian planter, under the consequent scarcity in the supply of labor and the low price of Liberian coffee, was unable to keep up his plantation and many once flourishing coffee plantations were by necessity given back to the Liberian forests.

LIBERIAN METHODS IN COFFEE CULTURE

In spite of the low price of coffee and the scarcity of the labor supply, many Liberians have kept up their plantations and coffee still occupies an important place in Liberian exports. During recent years there has been a revival in coffee culture in Liberia. The price advanced to 8 and 9 cents a pound. Upon the authority of the Governor of the Territory of Grand Cape Mount the visit of the American Commission to Liberia in 1909 was followed by the planting of thousands of coffee signs by the Africans about Robertsport.

In the culture of Liberian coffee the pulp of the berry is removed and the bean, incased in the second covering, is planted in beds as in a nursery. When these beans spring up they are called signs and when large enough are transplanted to the coffee farm 15 or 20 feet apart.

In from five to seven years, with proper attention in suitable soil, these signs begin to bear coffee. The coffee plant flourishes and attains a size in Liberia to be found in no other section of the globe. The berries are larger and richer and when properly cured possess the most delicious and aromatic flavor of any of the coffee-producing countries.

In Liberia two crops of coffee are gathered a year, one during the drys and one during the rains. The rains begin in April and May and close in October and November. The chief and most important coffee crop is gathered during the drys in the months of December, January and February. Coffee is mostly prepared by African native labor whose wage ranges from 24 to 36 cents a day and board. When the coffee is picked the berry is usually crushed in a mill or mortar and then spread on the ground in the sun until well dried. Every evening the coffee is removed to avoid getting wet from the dew or rain. When dried it is placed and beaten in the mortar until all the pulp is entirely separated from the beans. It is finally cleaned by fanning and some of the planters grade it by removing all broken and undeveloped beans.

The Liberian coffee is very strong on account of the manner of preparation with a tinge of bitterness, and it is used in Europe to give strength to weaker coffees. The bitterness comes from the second incasement which is permitted to effect the bean, and is often mixed with other coffees to overcome it. However, should the Liberian coffee be passed through a process of fermentation, so that the saccharine substance of the pulp between the outer and inner layers is absorbed by the latter and the beans, instead of having the beans embittered by the second incasement, both second incasement and beans will be sweetened by the sugar elements of the pulp. Some of the planters do this and when done the Liberian coffee possesses the most delicious and the richest aromatic flavor of any of the known coffees.

COFFEE EXPORTATION IN LIBERIA

Some coffee is cultivated in all the counties of the republic; but now it is chiefly exported from the Territory of Grand Cape Mount and Montserrado County. Beginning to decline from about 1895, coffee continued to fall and piassavia to rise in export importance until 1904–1905, when piassavia took first place and coffee second. As the hope of the rise in the price of coffee grew more faint Liberian planters, more and more, turned their attention to the cultivation and exploitation of other products; so that by 1908 instead of ranking first or second, coffee is fourth in Liberian exports.

During that fiscal year while coffee was still under the depression of hard times, Liberia exported 1,895,082 pounds of coffee and realized $164,930. For this same year coffee exportation was $30,560 less than that of palm kernels, $38,358 less than that of piassavia, and $185,263 less than palm oil; and yet, it was still one of the five ranking industries of the nation. In the palmy days of Liberian coffee the average annual exportation was only 1,500,000 pounds, 395,082 pounds less than was exported in 1908. So that after all it is not so much that coffee has gone down in Liberian export importance as it is that under the stimulus of economic demand other Liberian industries have gone up.

LIBERIA RICH IN A VARIED FAUNA

It is said that Liberia is characterized by no striking geographical boundaries, yet the country has a rich and varied fauna, and in this respect, for its size, has no equal throughout the vast regions of West Africa. Some light is thrown on the reason for this wealth and variety of Liberian fauna when it is known that comprehended within the limits of Liberia is the greatest expression of the striking West African forest belt. And as if to add special value to this rich forested section, it is separated from the forests of Old Calabar on the east by hundreds of miles of

the deforested regions of the Gold Coast and Dahomey, and cut off on the west by the highlands of Futa Jalon. For these reasons in addition to having animal forms characteristic of the West African tropics, Liberia has many forms peculiar to the country and which have not been noted elsewhere. Liberia is therefore a great natural source of rare and varied hides and is the greatest of the West African sections.

LIBERIAN HIDE RESOURCES

(1) *Hides of the hartebeast.* The hides of two forms of the hartebeast are found in Liberia and one of them has a satin mauve-brown coat marked on the front and hind limbs with velvet black, and elsewhere in a pale yellow.

(2) *The buffalo.* The bovines are represented in Liberia by two varieties, the red buffalo (Bubalus nanus) as found in the Congo and by the smaller African buffalo (Bubalus planiceros) found also in Senegal and the regions of Lake Chad. In Liberia the hides of these animals are obtained from different sections. The red buffalo inhabits the thick forested regions of the hinterlands, while what is called the African buffalo ranges further inland upon the Mandingan plateau. The Liberian red buffalo is of a yellow color in its pelage and darkens on the front of the limbs into a blackish brown.

(3) *The cat family.* The cat family is well represented in Liberia and they supply some of the most beautiful furs. Some may be secured from the *serval cat,* a small animal with a spotted fur; some from two forms of the *Celidogaster cat,* one of them a spotted grey about the size of the fox, the other a beautiful, golden, copper color and not quite so large. There are two or three varieties of the *Civet cat,* commonly called the bush cat, a small two-spotted animal, which on account of its musk gland at one time formed an important article in Liberian commerce. In northern Liberia Hyena furs are found, a spotted and a striped form, and it is said that there is a third form in a much larger animal. But above them all in magnificence

and beauty are the splendid leopard hides, sought and prized by every Liberian visitor who has the high privilege to behold one.

(4) *The pecora family.* Very beautiful furs may be obtained from two varieties of the antelope. (a) The tragelaphs are represented by the Harnessed antelope with its red-gold coat of long silky hair, beautifully striped and spotted with white; and by the still more magnificent form of the broad-horned tragelaphs, the *Bongo*, found in Liberia across the country from Sierre Leone to the Cavalla River, the eastern limits of the Liberian republic.

(b) The furs of several forms of the duiker family may be found in Liberia. There are three varieties of this animal with procumbent small horns, long head and slender limbs, with a light bay coloration. There are other forms more pig-like in their form and resemble somewhat the chevrotains. And besides these Liberia has two forms peculiar to the country: The big *Jentinks duiker* about the size of a sheep with white shoulders, and the small *Zebra* antelope. The *Zebra* antelope (doricae) is about sixteen inches high with a coloration of orange brown and black with white stripes and short horns, and is very commonly found in Liberia.

(c) There may also be found the largest of the duikers, the *black duiker*. Another is the yellow-backed duiker, the greater portion of whose body is a rich, glossy dark brown with a reddish tinge in places, and a tuft of hair between the horns in orange coloration. This animal begins in French Guinea and continues in a belt through the Congo to British Central Africa.

(d) There is also the form of the *Royal* antelope, a little animal about ten inches high and twenty inches long with white chin and under-surface, the other portions being blackish except the forehead and nose-ridge, and with very short horns.

(5) *The monkey family.* The furs of not less than six different kinds of monkeys may be obtained in Liberia: Two varieties of the *white-nosed* monkey inhabit a section in West Africa from Senegambia on the west to Uganda

on the east; but the two *white-nosed* Liberian monkeys are peculiar to the country, differing from the others in that one of them has a long white mark over the eyebrows extending across the face to below the ear. With no black band stretching over the skull the other variety has an indistinct patch of hair in the place of the white line. The coloring of these two monkeys is a mottled yellow-green, with black on the top of the head, outside of the arms, neck, hands, and the last half of the tail, and with the chin, breast, inside of arms and stomach white.

In the western part of Liberia may be found a pretty little *green* monkey, said to be related to the white-nosed type, but with no white nose and with a yellowish stomach, throat and whiskers, a whitish line across the brow uniting with the whiskers back of the ear, while the top of the head and tail and outside of hands and face are black. It is thought by some that this *green* monkey is a modified form of the *grivet* monkey of North Eastern Africa, grading itself westward across the continent to Senegal.

Another form to be found is the *Bay-thighed* monkey in coloration much like the typical *Diana* form with the difference that the outer edge and inside of the thighs are bright chestnut-red instead of white. A white breast extending to a white line across the brow, uniting the whiskers and shoulders in solid white about a dark face, make this monkey one of the most beautiful as well as impressive of animals.

Besides the foregoing the *Colobus* is represented in Liberia by the red monkey, bluish black or dark grey halfway on each side and on the top of the head, with its whiskers, throat, stomach and other portions of the body a rich chestnut red. And belonging to the same species is another monkey called in Liberia the Mangrove monkey, which may be seen in troupes in the mangrove thickets.

And besides monkeys there are two forms of the *Lemurs*, the *potto* and the *galago*. The former has a thick, soft, woolly and reddish-grey fur with underparts in ochre-yellow, and they go to make up that fine collection of monkey furs which may be obtained in Liberia.

(6) *Other furs obtainable.* In Liberia may also be found the striped jackal, two kinds of otters, the clawless and the spotted-necked otter. The clawless type is much larger than the European or the spotted-necked otter; yet from each of them may be secured a splendid fur. The Liberian *water chevrotain* also has a fine fur. It is a rich brown, slightly darker in the male than in the female, with white spots or streaks running horizontally along the sides. There is also the alligator and the Liberian python, the latter reaching in this country often 20 feet and sometimes much more in length. Some of these furs are very valuable and when properly prepared are highly prized.

DIFFICULTIES OF LIBERIAN COMMERCE

Aside from the difficulties of stagnation in prices of Liberian coffee, the scarcity in the labor supply, the outgrown methods of coffee preparation, Liberian coffee labors under the additional difficulties of monopolistic tendencies. Liberian planters generally are forced to sell coffee to the merchant classes for what the latter arbitrarily agree among themselves to give. The Liberians have not the capital organized in accord with the latest business methods to develop their natural resources in mining, rubber, furs and coffee, to say nothing concerning pepper, palm tree culture, sugar cane development, cotton, cocoa, calabar bean, and the kola nut, besides the various fine woods especially mahogany. Such European capital as they have from time to time admitted to the country has been attended with some political plan and purpose to overthrow the independence of the Liberian state. Up to this time no Americans with sufficient capital combined with adequate business intelligence have been sufficiently interested in Liberian development to undertake seriously the bringing of Liberia's great natural wealth within the reach of American consumption and distribution in the interest of human welfare.

Because of the dangers to Liberian independence excited by the great natural resources of Liberia exhibited by

Europeans when permitted to undertake the development of Liberian hinterlands under important concessions, and because of the inability of Liberians to impress American capital with the extent and variety of her natural wealth, the situation is that today the phenomenal resources of Liberia are locked up in the hinterlands of that country, when they could be contributing in countless ways toward the comfort and welfare of mankind.

Since 1870 Liberia has been engaged in a great struggle to hold the wealth of her hinterlands from European colony-holding powers until American capital could be interested. There is great need that Liberian hinterlands should be scientifically and thoroughly explored and its varied natural products developed not so much for the great rewards which they would give as for the social values which this development would confer upon both the African and American races.

During the present war in Europe Liberian commerce has been practically paralyzed. The contest in Europe is expected to change the map of Africa as well as Europe. If among the changes in Africa American capital should become interested in the development of Liberian natural resources it would be very difficult to estimate either the additions to modern wealth or the social comforts which would be added to modern culture.